

Title : Calligraphy as a creative springboard in the classroom

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Dip ADT

INTRODUCTION

I. THE HISTORY OF CALLIGRAPHY

A brief history of calligraphy starting with the earliest alphabets in ancient Egypt and Sumeria through to the birth of our own alphabet in Greece and Phoenicia and dealing with the great tradition of calligraphy in the monasteries of Ireland in early Christian Ireland

II. CALLIGRAPHY IN CHINESE SCHOOLS

This chapter deals with calligraphy in schools in China where it is still considered an artform.

III. CALLIGRAPHY IN THE CURRICULUM IN IRELAND

This chapter deals with calligraphy in Irish schools and how if it used in a design capacity can be very rewarding for the student.

IV. THE WORK OF DENIS BROWN AS A SUPPORT STUDY

The Irish calligrapher Denis Brown is considered to be a world class practitioner combining modern painting techniques with a fresh calligraphic style.

V. CREATIVE CALLIGRAPHY IN THE CLASSROOM

An experiment in creative calligraphy using animal characters.

VI. CONCLUSION

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NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

CALLIGRAPHY AS A CREATIVE
SPRINGBOARD IN THE CLASSROOM

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Education
in
Candidacy for the

DIPLOMA FOR ART AND DESIGN TEACHERS

by

Aideen Gough

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dedicated to the loving memory of my brother Christopher.

With sincere thanks for the support of Paul and Christina, Eileen Doyle,

the second year students of Newpark Comprehensive, Blackrock, and

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	II
Chapter	
INTRODUCTION	1
I. THE HISTORY OF CALLIGRAPHY	2
That which belongs to pharaoh	
From the Ionian sea to the island of Iona	
II. CALLIGRAPHY IN CHINESE SCHOOLS	12
III. CALLIGRAPHY IN THE CURRICULUM IN IRELAND	15
IV. THE WORK OF DENIS BROWN AS A SUPPORT STUDY	19
V. CREATIVE CALLIGRAPHY IN THE CLASSROOM	22
VI. CONCLUSION	24
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	26

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis is to explore the use of calligraphy as a creative spring board in the classroom. It is important to first understand and appreciate the long journey that writing and calligraphy has taken to the present day. Born out of a practical need to record the first economic transactions it has developed over the centuries into an artform which in some cultures compares with the greatest of the arts. It is also one of the few artforms that sits comfortably in both the world of fine art and design.

Through a scheme of work the second year art class of Newpark Comprehensive, Blackrock were introduced to basic letterforms starting with the uncial hand. On week three the art element of line was combined with form to produce a design, in this case we chose an animal. Later the designs were executed in colour and the scheme culminated in mark making associated with the work of Denis Brown.

The students were made aware of the cultural difference in the use of letters and how calligraphy can be a pure artform in reaction to the photo mechanical industrial reproduction of the printed letterform. Like Chinese calligraphy, the students were encouraged to endow their animal characters with life, animating them without losing legibility. Jean Christian Knaff, a children's book illustrator who uses letters and images in unison proved to be the best possible support study for this scheme.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORY OF CALLIGRAPHY

That which belongs to pharaoh

“The profession of a scribe is a princely profession. His writing materials and his rolls of books bring pleasantness and riches”.(1)

So wrote an unknown Egyptian scribe of nearly five thousand years ago. His words have travelled down through time and his thoughts are revisited every time the papyrus on which they were written is unravelled and read, albeit by a scholar familiar with ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. Although he and his fellow Egyptians were not the first to use writing as a means of communication (they were only beaten to it by a couple of hundred years by their near neighbours in the Middle East, the Sumerians), they were the first to practice it as an art form.

Both Sumerian and Egyptian civilisations first grew and prospered simultaneously about six thousand years ago and they are credited with many other early developments. Both civilisations established the first great cities, a central government and practised skills to a high level of competence. With these developments came the need for the people to develop a system of recording both for day to day transactions and the great events of their growing empires.

It is generally agreed that writing developed “as a direct consequence of the compelling demands of the expanding economies” (2) of both Sumeria and

Egypt. So wealthy and successful had these societies become that by the late fourth century BC the volume of trade had outstripped the ability of the merchant classes to remember the growing number of transactions. The need to make a list of the crops in the warehouse or the incomings and outgoings of the temple became of vital importance to the continuation of their successful economies.

Both Egyptian and Sumerian civilisations used a system of pictorial symbols which represented the words and concepts that recorded their business transactions. The earliest Sumerian clay tablets of c.3500 BC uses pictograms of such recognisable features as head, feet and hands. This system although workable was complicated and relied on the reader knowing the two thousand symbols that formed the written language.

The most significant early development occurred when it was realised that a symbol representing one word could also be used for a similar sounding word and that such symbols could be put together to form composite words. The word 'bee' and 'leaf' for instance could be combined to make the word 'belief' which bears no direct relationship to the original words. These symbols representing sounds were freed from the original, illustrative conventions of pictograms. This meant that the huge number of symbols could be reduced and their forms stylised. The essence of an alphabet and calligraphy was born.

Although the clay tablets on which most early writing was done were easy to produce and plentiful in supply, clay had its limitation as a writing surface and could never produce writing that could be described as calligraphy. The Egyptians were quick to develop other materials on which to write and record. Our scribe of five thousand years ago was fortunate to be able to work on papyrus, a thin flexible material, made from reeds, which were in plentiful supply along the banks of the Nile. It is worth noting that the word papyrus means 'that which belongs to Pharaoh'.

Another great Egyptian development was the reed brush which was used with liquid ink and which freed calligraphers from the difficulties of writing and recording in stone and clay. It was now easier and faster not only to record, but it was possible to do it with a greater flow and aesthetic quality. There was also the practical consideration in a booming economy that a greater number of records could be produced and stored more easily. Documents of great importance were usually transcribed onto the treated skins of animals. This skin was known as vellum and is still used today as the preferred surface by most calligraphers.

The Egyptians were the first to rank calligraphy amongst the most important skills of their society. The calligrapher or scribe was one of a tiny proportion of Egyptian society which was literate and thus exerted great power. In later times the priests (who were all trained as scribes) may have ensured that there was an even smaller number of scribes by deliberately

making hieroglyphic script more complicated, so as to exclude secular people.

An outward sign of the importance of the scribe in Egyptian society was the production of the book of the dead. This important book, more accurately described as a papyrus roll, "formed part of the all important and elaborate burial ritual in Egypt".(2) The text consisted of religious spells. The quality of the book varied greatly depending on the wealth of the individual, even though few could read it. Some were made to order while others were standard copies without much artistry. A space was left to add the buyer's name and title in recognition of the fact that books were expensive, rare and represented a sometimes significant investment for the buyer.

From the Ionian sea to island of Iona

Around one thousand BC, a great trading and seafaring people started to dominate the eastern Mediterranean. The Phoenicians were such great sailors that it has been speculated that they may have reached America two and a half thousand years before Columbus. However it is their alphabet that is their greatest legacy to the modern world There is a direct line from the alphabet the Phoenicians developed to the one we use today. The Phoenicians used an alphabet of thirty symbols based on consonantal

signs, which was not derived from either the earlier Sumerian or Egyptian alphabets.

Through trade and settlement in other countries they passed their alphabet on, especially to the Greeks who further reduced it to twenty-four consonants. They also added vowel sounds which were more prevalent in their own language. The Greeks themselves were a seafaring people and dominated the Ionian, Aegean, and Adriatic seas. They traded and lived with the Etruscans in west central Italy and who recognised the effectiveness of the Greek alphabet, adopting it as their own. They in turn were incorporated into an expanding Roman Empire. Much of the Etruscan culture was lost, but the Romans recognised the value of their alphabet and adopted it.

The alphabet the Romans used provides us with the most widely used system of written communication in the world today. It has changed very little over two thousand years since it was first adopted. Its only great modification came in the Middle Ages when the letters *J*, *U* and *W* were inserted to distinguish certain sounds previously related to the letters *I* and *V*. There are other widely used alphabets in use in the world today which have also developed over thousands of years. However none of these is as universal as the Roman alphabet. Whether the traveller is on a underground station in Singapore or following a road sign in Afghanistan the Roman alphabet is ever present.

The vastness and organisation of the Roman empire ensured that their alphabet became the standard of written communication and learning throughout Europe and beyond. Even after the fall of the Roman Empire the sheer number of carved inscriptions to be found in the Roman world meant that the classical form of their writing would survive. These elegant formal letters known as quadrata were also drawn with brush and pen but their forms owe more to the chisel than the brush.

However examples of the day to day rapid cursive hand used for business and administration has not survived in great numbers. Documents and manuscripts in this hand were written on papyrus. Reed brushes or pens and later quill pens were used but due to the perishable nature of these materials the documents have not survived.

Wax tablets were also used but these provide little insight into the early calligraphic hand of the Romans as they were drawn using a stylus. This gave a monoline effect such as a ball point pen would produce. The large number of Romans receiving education meant that the wax tablet was a far more practical teaching aid. Both Papyrus and vellum were too expensive for young Romans to practice their hand on and did not readily allow for corrections as did the wax tablet. Once a Roman schoolboy had practised his hand his wax tablet was heated and smoothed, ready for re-use.

Knowledge of early calligraphic methods is very important to the modern

calligraphy student. It is important that students in the classroom appreciate that the same levels of calligraphic skill and teaching methods are needed today as were needed in ancient societies.

The papyrus rolls which were so commonly used in Egypt, Greece and early Rome were eventually replaced by the codex book in both schools and daily life. The eventual dominance of the book occurred for several practical reasons; it was possible to write on both sides of a vellum book, where as only one side of a papyrus roll could be used as the outer surface was exposed to continual handling. It was also difficult to find where any given piece of text was on a long roll, while a book could be opened at the precise piece of text that was required.

As a result of the popularity of the book the quill pen rather than the heavier reed became popular. Vellum became the main material used because it had a number of advantages over the more fibrous papyrus for the calligrapher. Vellum was much smoother and allowed a greater flow of ink without damaging the delicate quill nib which was preferred from both an aesthetic and practical point of view. However as in ancient times it is far too expensive for students' practice in the classroom.

These technical changes naturally brought about changes in style. In the fourth century AD the Romans had developed a new script based on the carved formal capitals. This was known as uncial and was to be used in the

Christian world for the next four centuries. The versatility of the quill and vellum meant that some of the characters could now be rounded. The uncial was followed by the half uncial whereby letters such as the *h* and *p* broke through the writing line as ascenders and descenders. Half uncial script was secondary to uncial and both were later replaced by formal minuscule alphabets.

The uncial is today often the first hand that calligraphic teachers introduce to the student. The effect of the uncial can be achieved by using a double pencil i.e. using two pencils stuck together.

Although the Roman empire eventually collapsed, the practical day to day workings of its many regions continued, helped by the growing strength of the Church. In the northern parts of the former empire and beyond, Irish monks from monasteries such as Iona and Lindisfarne maintained both the old Roman traditions and evolved new ones. Three and a half thousand years after the life of our Egyptian scribe many of the calligraphic innovations of his time found their way to Ireland. Calligraphy and the calligrapher were to become as revered in Ireland as much as in its original birth place, Egypt. The monasteries which produced the great Irish calligraphic books of the sixth to the eighth centuries were themselves an Egyptian idea which was adopted with great vigour in Ireland.

The Irish monastic monks were capable of their own innovations and

developed the uncials into half uncials and later what was known as insular scripts. This hand was transmitted across the continent of Europe by Irish missionary monks who risked their lives in an effort to spread learning and the message of the Gospels.

The tradition evolved of writing the Gospels in the form of highly decorated codex books. In the Columban monasteries of Iona, Kells and Lindisfarne, monks working in scriptoria produced works of calligraphy of such beauty that they have never been equalled. The Book of Kells is the greatest calligraphic work to have emerged from any of these monasteries. There is an unstinting wealth of decorative embellishments including a multitude of miniatures and sketches within the text as well as the carpet pages, full page portraits of the Evangelists and elaborately ornamented initials.

In introducing Irish students to calligraphy it is important to remind them of the heritage of calligraphy in their country. Not only was the Book of Kells the work of Irish monks but there are many other surviving books from the golden age of Irish manuscripts such as the book of Armagh, the book of Durrow and the Cathach. Undoubtedly there were countless other illuminated books produced during this golden age which were lost both to theft and the elements.

Leaving Certificate students focus on the Book of Kells in great depth and a visit to Trinity College to see it is often made. Students are required to

analyse the pictorial embellishments and illumination, as well as the layout and composition of the book. The student is also exposed to vast worldwide interest in the Book of Kells which manifests itself in the numbers of foreign visitors and the large number of books published on the subject.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 1

1. Robinson, Andrew; The Story of Writing Alphabets, Hieroglyphs & Pictograms. (London: Thames and Hudson 1995), p.106.
2. Robinson, Andrew; The Story of Writing Alphabets, Hieroglyphs & Pictograms, p.102.
3. Robinson, Andrew; The Story of Writing Alphabets, Hieroglyphs & Pictograms, p.102.

CHAPTER 2

CALLIGRAPHY IN CHINESE SCHOOLS

China is a country of over one billion people, numerous languages, and hundreds of dialects, but with only one alphabet. It is the oldest alphabet in use in the world today, predating the Roman alphabet by over a thousand years. It is also the most complicated. There are nearly forty-nine thousand characters in this alphabet. Most of them have evolved over many centuries and are shared by most of the nations of the Orient.

In China as in ancient Egypt, enormous value was placed on calligraphy and calligraphers. The Chinese do not speak of 'fine handwriting', but simply of 'the art of writing' or 'shufa'. In classical China, writing ('shu') was an art on a par with painting, poetry and music. The Chinese calligrapher aims "to endow the characters with life, to animate them without distorting their fundamental shape and thereby making them illegible". (1)

Learning this vast and complicated alphabet and system of writing at any time in China's history has always proved difficult. Chinese children learn the technique early, beginning with the simplest characters and moving to more and more complex ones. Following the teacher, a class of young children repeatedly trace the characters in the air with gestures of arm and hand over the course of many lessons. This is necessary as "the brush is not a rough tool like the pen, but an instrument which registers every move

of the hand, however slight or sudden, with exactness of the seismograph”.

(2) As the children trace the strokes through the air, they name each element.

When they have learned each gesture and its pronunciation they write the character down using the same broad rhythmical gestures. The final stage of their early calligraphic education involves learning to write the characters smaller on the page and in sequence with other characters.

There are decades of practice and learning between the early uneasy efforts of a child and the flow and poise of a master craftsman. A master calligrapher's skill is a combination of technique, his personal sensibilities and his study of past masters.

Despite the beauty and expression of the Chinese alphabet there have been several attempts to consign it to history. Recognising the practical difficulties the vast number of characters presented, Mao Zedong wrote:

“We believe Latinization is a good instrument with which to overcome illiteracy. Chinese characters are so difficult to learn that even the best system of rudimentary characters . . . does not equip the people with a really efficient and rich vocabulary. Sooner or later, we believe, we will have to abandon characters altogether.” (3)

Despite this and other movements in China and other Oriental countries to abandon the Chinese alphabet and fall into line with the western world by adopting the Latin alphabet, it remains the principal alphabet both in the

classroom and elsewhere. Just as the shapes and forms of the Latin alphabet say much about our own culture and origins, so too does the Chinese alphabet convey images far beyond the meaning of the words it depicts.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 2

- 1 Robinson, Andrew; The Story of Writing Alphabets. Hieroglyphs & Pictograms. London: Thames and Hudson 1995 p.192
- 2 Robinson, Andrew; The Story of Writing Alphabets. Hieroglyphs & Pictograms p.198
- 3 Robinson, Andrew; The Story of Writing Alphabets. Hieroglyphs & Pictograms p.200

CHAPTER 3

CALLIGRAPHY IN THE CURRICULUM IN IRELAND

Calligraphy is particularly relevant to the new curriculum of the Junior Certificate which was introduced between 1989 and 1992. The curriculum sets out to promote practical skills and this activity-based learning approach, "has been at the heart of curriculum reform in Ireland over the past decade. It is an approach to learning which relies on the process itself, not the transmission of knowledge, as the vehicle for learning".(1) These curriculum developments are fully in line with those envisaged by the European Commission, which sees the "development of entrepreneurial skills, of autonomous learning, of personal confidence, of critical awareness and of a pro-active attitude in individuals serves both personal and societal objectives: the benefits of this visionary policy can be seen in intrinsic and extrinsic terms, both to the individual and to society".(2)

Calligraphy is unique as a practical skill in that it is an artform all students practice at its most basic. It is learned at a very young age and each student quickly develops his/her own unique style of calligraphy, which we call handwriting. Sometimes their hand is an artistic one and sometimes it is merely practical. It may be the only form of artistic expression in which some students ever engage.

It is therefore a great challenge for any art teacher to teach students to

relearn something which they have already mastered. However this may also benefit the student in that a 'deeper knowledge and understanding may be achieved through discovery and personal experience especially when informed by what is already known'.(3)

In teaching calligraphy to Junior Certificate classes it is important to have specific objectives which may include, to increase the student's knowledge of letterforms, their evolution and their cultural implications, particularly in an Irish context and to reinforce and further develop in the young person the skill levels and understanding which is an aspiration of the Junior Certificate Art Craft Design programme.

At a practical level my aim was to teach functional and formal calligraphic styles – the foundation hand and the italic hands. When these are mastered the student could then go on to produce a more individual and artistic style of calligraphy using their own initiative and a degree of flexibility.

It is also important to challenge the students to achieve a level of excellence of which they can feel proud. By developing a proficient level in the calligraphy it is also possible to develop the young person's personal and social confidence.

An appreciation of calligraphy will reinforce the education of any student. Students engaged in problem solving design briefs may gain a vital

knowledge of the world and may inform their learning in other disciplines. Similarly the skills learned in the discipline of calligraphy can be translated into other areas of their schooling such as project work, posters and titles. "Design education is best seen not as a new subject but as a value-added to current educational practice, an enhancement of existing subjects through the focused application of the concepts of quality and of critical appreciation and awareness." (4)

The skills of calligraphy would also be useful in the world at large. Former student often do not retain lessons learned once they have left school. Even if a student never uses calligraphy when they have left school its guiding principles will stay with them, imbuing them with a love and understanding of letterforms. The skills learned in Junior Certificate calligraphy can also be applied on a broad entrepreneurial basis later in life. There are many small enterprises which use calligraphy in day to day output, from a graphic design studio to a handmade card business. Calligraphy is also used in a large number of ceremonial certificates such as marriages, baptisms and celebratory events.

Calligraphy allows for a variety of levels within a class group. It also does not inhibit those who excel. A lot of learning in calligraphy projects is through the process involved and the need to make connections between ideas, materials and subject matter. Activity based learning approach are a

strong recommendation of the new curriculum. Calligraphy with its design potential should be central to the Junior Certificate curriculum. Like the monastic calligrapher and limner (person who illuminates the text) the student may work on one aspect of a calligraphic project without necessarily completing the entire work themselves. Thus it allows for different levels of ability in different area.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 3

- 1 McCarthy, Iseult and Granville, Gary (edited); Design in Education, A Discussion Paper; Dublin: National College of Art and Design 1997 p.1.
- 2 McCarthy, Iseult and Granville, Gary (edited); Design in Education, p.2.
- 3 McCarthy, Iseult and Granville, Gary (edited); Design in Education, p.2.
- 4 McCarthy, Iseult and Granville, Gary (edited); Design in Education, p.3.

CHAPTER 4

THE WORK OF DENIS BROWN AS A SUPPORT STUDY

Denis Brown is currently one of the best known contemporary calligraphers in the world. He was a student at St. Benildus in Dundrum, Co.Dublin where his most influential art teacher was the internationally renowned calligrapher and author of The Irish Hand, Brother Tim O'Neill. Since leaving Roehampton Institute in London with a diploma in Advanced Calligraphy, Brown has placed himself in the front rank of modern calligraphers. His achievements and his style of work are amongst the best examples to show to Irish students studying calligraphy. He is the Irish fellow of The Society of Scribes and Illuminators.

Brown forms a link with the great tradition of calligraphy that was so prevalent in the monasteries of Ireland over a thousand years ago. That he first learned his art from a master exponent and indeed a religious brother is reminiscent of the Irish monastic tradition where calligraphic skills were passed on from a master to a group of young apprentice monks. Students should be reminded that they too can be involved in this time honoured tradition of the handing down of skills from master to student, as they are the next generation of potential apprentices. This cannot be emphasised enough to the students, who often view great art as something which occurred in other

countries without any direct link to them or their own culture.

It matters little that in the centuries between the production of the Book of Kells and the work of Brown there have been no great practitioners of calligraphy in Ireland and that the master/apprentice method has also been redundant. The important thing is that there was a tradition in the past and the work has survived to this day as a potential source of inspiration for the students to be inspired by and that there is a contemporary link to the future. It could be argued that Brown and his work is that tangible link between the students in the classroom and the great masters who created the Book of Kells.

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19. in the
practice of
Memorials
to
public figures

Despite a respect for the past, modern calligraphers have broken firmly with the monastic world in terms of style. In Britain, William Morris's Art and Crafts Movement of the middle of the 19th century brought about a revival in many fields of the visual arts including calligraphy. Edward Johnson drew inspiration from this revival and through his work freed calligraphy from the old world. The calligraphic work of the post-Johnson era developed new expressive potential and began to question its primary communicative function.

The most important of Brown's work is the Ancient Codex series (1992) (fig 1). It forms a valuable contemporary support study for students, with its balance and symmetry, its respect for the text and its superb execution. It

also has a mystical, druidic like quality which often appeals to students.

Brown is not only capable of working in an orthodox or formal style in a versatile and polished way. He is also capable of violent departure from the traditional. Brown sees calligraphy as being many different things and has experimented in various different approaches. Through his work Brown is making an intellectual and artistic statement about venerated cultural objects such as the Holy Book. This thought was perhaps too profound for the second year group of students but they seemed invigorated by the loose way in which their own learned skills could be directed.

The Ancient Codex series has a sinister beauty and an aesthetic spirit. I encouraged the second year students of Newpark Comprehensive to draw inspiration from these two observations of Brown's work. Scorch designs with fire at the edges closely supervised over the sink in the artroom produced work which was close in spirit to Brown's. Where it differed was that Brown chooses to disguise his original source, whereas the students never ventured too far from their original sources keeping the functional communicative nature of the calligraphy intact.

CHAPTER 5

CREATIVE CALLIGRAPHY IN THE CLASSROOM

The basis of my calligraphy rests on class work carried out in Newpark Comprehensive School in 1997/98. I taught the second year students basic letterforms starting with an introduction to formal tools and equipment used in calligraphic writing, gradually working through to a more creative and spontaneous design. Using the double pencil technique (two pencils bound together with masking tape or elastic bands with the points at the same level) I hoped to replicate a broad edged nib of thick and thin lines. Working on a work sheet through miniscule (or small letters) and majuscule (or capital letters). It is important to note in a classroom that for right handers the points should be level, while for left handers the left point is slightly lower.

The students responded well to the worksheets and the stimulus created by the use of visual aids and support studies. Students were asked to use their boards at a slope as this controls the ink coming from the pen. We used the method practised in China of tracing characters in the air to build up an understanding of the formation of strokes. Like the pictorial symbols used in the Egyptian and Sumerian civilisations, lettering combined with imagery was introduced to the students. In this instance we used an animal as the students had been drawing animals in previous classes.

emphasised that the image should enhance the lettering to give visual clarity but the form could be manipulated using the lettering. The word crocodile and also the image were used as visual aids (fig 2) to explain how effective image combined with lettering can be. The students carried out their tasks with vigour and excitement creating horses, ostriches, fish, pigs and dolphins in black and white.

The next stage involved colour application which gave further clarity to the designs. Several of the students attempts would be of excellent educational value to younger children learning to read. The best examples of the students work where colour further distinguishes type and image is the ostrich design where the 'O' of ostrich is the eye of the animal and the 'I' in the middle of the word is extended to become the legs of the ostrich (fig 3) – an excellent example of how the student met the calligraphic design problem with creativity and thought. The horse, dolphin, mouse and pig designs also displays great creativity (fig 4,5,6,7).

The final design in which we used Denis Brown as a support study shows clearly the attempt by the students to recreate the idea of parchment or old vellum in the tea bag treated paper and design in ink (fig 8,9,10,11). The burning of the paper round the side and bleaching of some letters gives an antique feel to the whole series done by the second year class. Students were thrilled with their own design developments and we hung them in sequential form to exaggerate its beginnings.

CONCLUSION

In the western world we have become accustomed to see lettering running from left to right and from top to bottom in straight lines of varying lengths and point sizes. With so much information bombarded at us daily through newspapers, signage, magazines and junk mail, the printed word is primarily for reading, not for seeing. This vast amount of written material to which we are exposed every day make us switch off our sensitivity to lettering. The act of reading lettering has become an everyday skill that most of us take for granted.

Calligraphy today does not have to conform to this traditional mould. The calligrapher whether they be professional or student has a wonderful opportunity to break free from this mould and make letters perform visually as well as intellectually. The student in particular whose experience with script may be confined to making notes in other subjects they are studying can make the greatest of artistic leaps with calligraphy. The same impulse which makes a student doodle in the margins or in the text of his or her notebooks, can in an calligraphy class be harnessed and given form and substance.

Of course the ability to sustain rhythm and momentum throughout a lengthy inscription, and at the same time to remember how to spell, is something that comes only with years of practice. Only very few students can hope to

achieve a professional standard of calligraphy in their time in class.

They can however, over a number of lessons and practice sessions reach a standard of which they will be proud and which may be put to good practical use outside the classroom. Many students would present with more confidence a calligraphic card than a piece of artwork to their school friend on their birthday. This can make calligraphy a living art which does not get left behind in the store room of the art room, particularly when the student receives favourable comment for their efforts. The student will soon discover an even wider range of uses that their calligraphy skills may be put to.

Calligraphy helps us to see what we are reading by making the words beautiful. Much of its impact relies upon producing a rhythmic texture in the writing, but tensions can also be used to disturb us. Seen in this light, calligraphy is a powerful tool for communicating the written word in the modern world.

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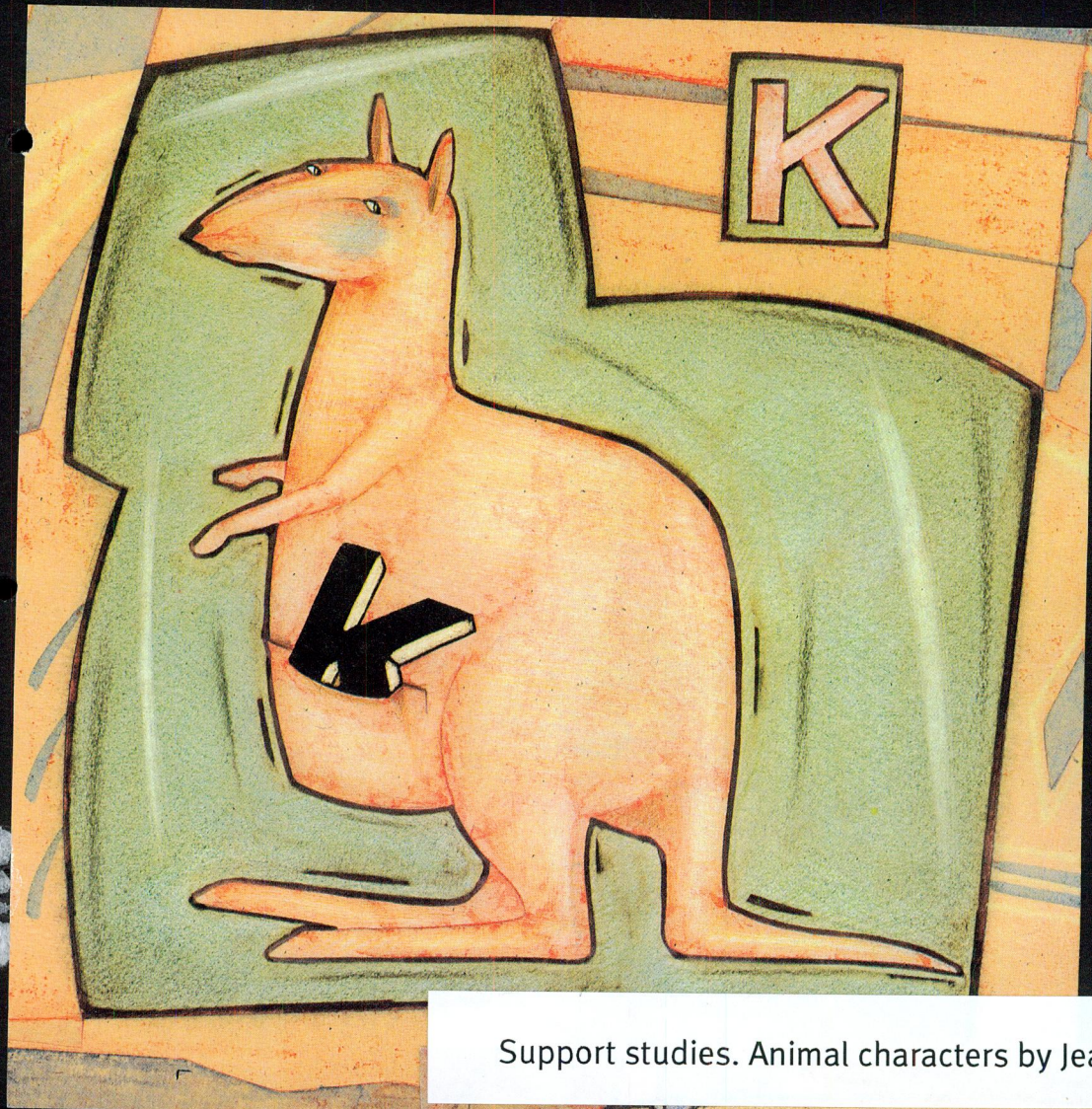
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Support studies. Animal characters by Jean Christian Knaff.



Visual Aid



(fig 2) Visual aids used to explain the development in the sequence from black and white to colour designs.



(fig 3) Ostrich design in colour with mark making techniques. Newpark Comprehensive Junior Cert student.

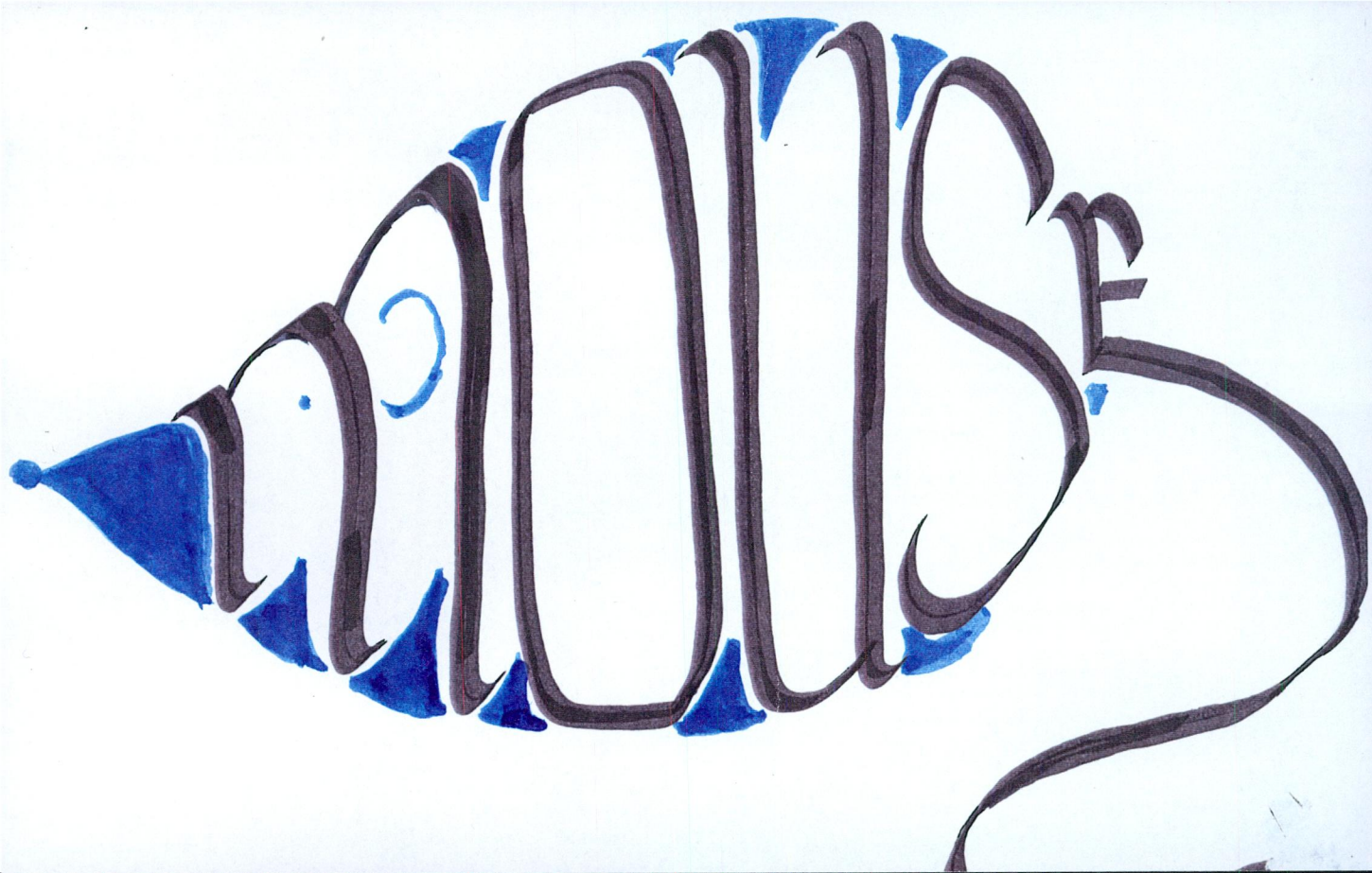


(fig 4) Colour horse design in colour with mark making techniques. Newpark Comprehensive Junior Cert student.



Matthew de Courcy.

(fig 5) Colour dolphin design. Newpark Comprehensive Junior Cert student.



(fig 6) Colour mouse design. Newpark Comprehensive Junior Cert student.



(fig 7) Colour pig design. Newpark Comprehensive Junior Cert student.



(fig 8) Successful calligraphic horse design using staining and bleach techniques.
Newpark Comprehensive Junior Cert student.



(fig 9) Calligraphic dolphin design using staining and bleach techniques. Newpark Comprehensive Junior Cert student.



(fig 10) Calligraphic mouse design using staining and bleach techniques. Newpark Comprehensive Junior Cert student.



(fig 11) Calligraphic pig design using staining and bleach techniques. Newpark Comprehensive Junior Cert student.